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ELP Grad Takes Reins of FEMA Region III

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MaryAnn Tierney won't have to travel far for her latest career move.

Tierney was named Regional Administrator for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Region III this month and will begin work at the post Aug. 31.

The FEMA post is based in Philadelphia, where Tierney has served as that city's Deputy Managing Director for Emergency Management since November 2006.

Tierney completed the Executive Leaders Program at the Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security in November 2009.

She credits that program with instilling a new outlook on leadership to complement her years of emergency management experience.

"It was really eye opening," she said. "I had never attended program where they took what I did everyday and added the leadership component. It has definitely made me a more strategic thinker. It was a really smart group of people. I've never been in a program where everybody is a national expert in their field."

The step up the career ladder means Tierney won't be moving, but overnight her area of responsibility enlarged greatly. Tierney has a wealth of experience working as a local emergency manager working in concert with FEMA. Her immediate challenge in the new job will be to familiarize herself with the inner-workings of the agency.

"I think it will be a learning experience to see how FEMA operates internally and how it works with the states," she said by phone. "I'm also looking forward to learning how Region III fits in with the overall (FEMA) picture."

Region III encompasses Washington, D.C., as well as the states of Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. That means addressing the emergency needs of metro areas such as Baltimore and Philadelphia as well as rural areas such as those found in West Virginia and western Pennsylvania.

"It is a very diverse region where the issues are wide-ranging," Tierney noted. "The issues faced by emergency management in West Virginia faces are probably different than what the District (of Columbia) faces."

The mid-Atlantic area is known for equally harsh winters and summers while the coastal areas area susceptible to hurricanes and the western fringes of the region are prone to flooding.

"There are a range of threats that face Region III," Tierney said.

Tierney brings a wealth of emergency planning experience to FEMA. During her tenure in Philadelphia she oversaw a transformation of the city's preparedness program, according to the office of Mayor Michael A. Nutter. She is credited with crafting consistent, operational emergency plans and procedures, conducting training exercises for first responders and building partnerships with the private sector as well as community organizations.

"I would like to thank MaryAnn for her invaluable service to the city of Philadelphia," Nutter said. "Philadelphia is now



a safer, more secure and more prepared city because of her leadership. I wish her success at FEMA as she takes on the even larger role of preparing our region for emergency situations."

As Assistant Commissioner for Planning and Preparedness in New York City where she oversaw the revision of the City's Coastal Storm Plan and coordinated the debris operation at the World Trade Center. She also was responsible for New York City's application for Federal funding to reimburse costs associated with the response to and recovery from 9/11, which totaled over \$4.75 billion.

Tierney holds a master's degree in public administration from New York University and a Bachelor of Arts in political science from American University.

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